



SWINE INFLUENZA ALERT: April 26, 2009

INFORMATION FOR MEDICAL STAFF AT ROUGE VALLEY HEALTH SYSTEM

BACKGROUND

Swine Influenza (swine flu) is a respiratory disease of pigs caused by type A influenza that regularly results in outbreaks of influenza among pigs. Human infections with swine flu occur and cases of human-to-human spread of swine flu have been documented.

Human swine influenza has been reported in Canada, Mexico and the United States (California, Texas, Kansas, New York and Ohio). This strain of human swine influenza is a new, or novel, influenza virus (H1N1). Since this is a new strain, people will likely have no natural immunity to protect against the virus. As a result, international experts are concerned that this strain could spread quickly.

At current count, approximately 1,400 people are ill in Mexico and 86 people have died. There are 20 confirmed cases in the United States. There are a total of six confirmed cases in Canada, four in Nova Scotia and two in British Columbia According to recent reports from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) in the United States and the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC), all of the cases in North America are mild.

CLINICAL PRESENTATION

Human swine influenza causes symptoms similar to those of the regular human seasonal flu. The symptoms include fever, fatigue, lack of appetite, cough and sore throat. Some people with human swine influenza have also reported vomiting and diarrhea. The cases in Mexico presented with an influenza-like illness that progressed over a period of four to five days to severe respiratory distress. Several individuals have required mechanical ventilation. The age range has been seven to 54 yrs. The majority are previously health young adults, aged 25 to 44 years old.

THE FOLLOWING RECOMMENDATIONS ARE CURRENTLY IN PLACE AT ROUGE VALLEY HEALTH SYSTEM

* **Dr. Ashley Roberts**, medical director of infectious diseases at Rouge Valley, should be consulted immediately if any patient is suspected of having swine influenza (she can be paged directly through the hospital switchboard).

**For questions regarding patient isolation/infection control and prevention, there is 24-hour on-call coverage for Infection Control and Prevention (can be reached via hospital switchboard).

***Influenza-like illness is defined as the presence of fever, cough and/or sore-throat, and/or vomiting, and/or diarrhea.

1. PATIENTS

- A) All patients should be screened for symptoms of influenza-like illness at the time of emergency room visit, or admission to the wards or Intensive Care Unit.
- B) A travel history regarding patient or close family travel Mexico, California, Texas, New Mexico, Kansas, New York or Ohio within the last two weeks is to be taken.
- C) Patients with influenza-like illness symptoms and a travel history to the affected areas require:
- i) Isolation using Airborne Precautions;
 - ii) Family members assessed and excluded if they have symptoms of influenza-like illness;
 - iii) Special laboratory investigations/procedures (see below);
 - iv) Isolation precautions discontinued only with approval from Infection Prevention and Control.

2. STAFF

- A) N95 mask use for all individuals entering the patient room.
- B) Limited staff entering the room
- C) FOR STAFF with Influenza-like illness and relevant travel history:

Any staff member who has traveled to the above-mentioned areas in the last four weeks and who currently has influenza-like symptoms (fever, cough and/or sore throat, and/or vomiting, and/or diarrhea) is to stay at home and contact Rouge Valley Occupational Health.

3. LABORATORY TESTING

Patients with an influenza like illness and travel history require the following specimens sent to the laboratory:

- Nasopharyngeal swab in viral transport medium
- Bronchoalveolar lavage specimen if available (sterile container for viral culture)
- Throat swab for mycoplasma and chlamydomphila pneumoniae pcr (using Multitrans transport)
- Blood in EDTAm (purple top)
- Blood in clotted tube (red top)
- Urine for Legionella antigen
- Send a PHAC SRI Report Form at:

http://www.health.gov.on.ca/english/providers/program/infectious/diseases/best_prac/bp_fri_080406.pdf

* Write "SRI High Priority: Attention **Dr. Gubbay**" on the requisition form.

Please contact Infection Prevention and Control for general questions or concerns. Dr. Ashley Roberts can be contacted for questions regarding specific patient/staff member concerns.